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Celebrity Buzz



**50 Cent
talks
about
fire**
pg 26

America's Most Wanted suspect deported to U.S.

CRIME An American suspect of America's Most Wanted notoriety caught in Calgary last week has been deported.

Steven Andrew Hayes, 49, is wanted in Texas for aggravated sexual assault of a child and was featured on the popular crime show. He was on the run since 2005 until he was caught in Calgary on Dec. 9.

"People who commit acts of violence are not welcome in Canada and Canada will not be a safe haven for fugitives," Lisa White, spokesperson for the Canada Border Services Agency said.

Hayes was escorted by Canadian officials and handed over to U.S. marshalls.

METRO CALGARY

World pg 12

Italy hunting down mob

Comments pg 17

Vancouverites shocked by cold, snow

IntelliVision pg 25

Canadian Idol contest stalls

ShareYourViews

calgaryletters@metronews.ca



The Adams family smiles despite their despair after thieves ripped off more than 30 wrapped Christmas gifts and \$1,000 in rent and bill money. They say being together with family and having one another will get them through an otherwise discouraging Christmas.

Cops seek helpers of assaulted woman

KRISTA SYLVESTER
krista.sylvester@metronews.ca

City police are urgently seeking people from two vehicles who helped a woman who was assaulted Friday and is now in critical condition.

Staff Sgt. Rosemary Hawkins said the incident occurred around 11:40 p.m. along Canyon Meadows Drive and Queensland Drive SE.

"There was an incident between a man and a woman, and the woman suffered severe extensive head injuries, which left her unconscious and she is now in critical condition in the hospital," she said.

Police have the man in custody for questioning and say charges are pending.

Hawkins said there were people in two vehicles who may have helped the woman. They are specifically looking for two males from a beige-coloured Toyota Corolla or a Nissan Altima who drove the couple to their home in Deer Run.

"We believe they may have crucial information and they might not even know it. We want to know what they were told," she said.

Police are also hoping a man and a woman driving by who may have helped the couple will come forward.

Grinch strikes family

Parents, four kids robbed of 30 Christmas gifts, rent money

NEIL MACKINNON
neil.mackinnon@metronews.ca

Rebecca Morray and Randy Adams were wondering how to tell their four children Santa might not be coming this year.

A train, a toy drum and a Playstation 3 were among 30 gifts meant for Selena, 11, Paul, 6, Zakkari, 4, and Kaydin, 11 months, that were stolen from the Adams family home at 35 MacEwen Glen Rd. NW on Monday night.

The thieves also took more than \$1,000 for next month's rent and utility bills. The family computer and television are all the electronics that remain.

"They stole a whole year's worth of children's wishes," said Adams.

Police said the culprits tampered with a basement window to get in and rummaged through dresser drawers, taking cash, electronic items and the family's Christmas gifts.

"How do you tell your children Santa isn't com-

ing this year because he can't afford it?" a teary-eyed Morray said. "It breaks my heart. Sorry kids, Santa isn't coming because some jerks stole everything."

Adams, who moved into the neighbourhood three months ago from Canmore, put off fully paying bills for months and worked hours of overtime to provide a "decent Christmas" for his family, who were out of the house for three hours buying a present "for mommy" on

Monday night.

When they returned home, virtually everything under the Christmas tree, including a handmade present the children put hours into crafting for their mother, was gone.

Three small presents were left, including a walker for Kaydin the thieves took time to unwrap.

"The money should have been enough, but stealing gifts for kids — I don't understand what kind of lowlife could have done that," Adams said.

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Canada: ONE-WAY Tango fares from Calgary. Travel must be completed by November 30, 2009.

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\$64	\$89	\$89	\$169	\$179	\$179	\$209	\$239

USA: ONE-WAY Tango Plus fares from Calgary. Travel must be completed by November 30, 2009.

ATLANTA	LAS VEGAS	BOSTON	LOS ANGELES	HOUSTON	NEW YORK	SAN DIEGO	MAUI
\$129	\$146	\$150	\$154	\$160	\$165	\$165	\$275

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Sun: ONE-WAY fares from Calgary, for travel as indicated below.

NASSAU JAN. 1, 2009–NOV. 30, 2009	MONTEGO BAY JAN. 1, 2009–NOV. 30, 2009	ST. LUCIA JAN. 1, 2009–NOV. 30, 2009	BARBADOS JAN. 1, 2009–NOV. 30, 2009	MEXICO CITY JAN. 1, 2009–NOV. 30, 2009	BERMUDA JAN. 1, 2009–NOV. 30, 2009	CARACAS JAN. 1, 2009–NOV. 30, 2009	GRAND CAYMAN JAN. 8–26, 2009 MARCH 15–30, 2009
\$229	\$289	\$299	\$339	\$390	\$400	\$424	\$539

International: Fares are EACH WAY from Calgary and require ROUND-TRIP purchase. Departure dates as indicated below.

LONDON HEATHROW JAN. 1, 2009–APRIL 30, 2009	MUNICH ¹ FRANKFURT ¹ JAN. 1, 2009–MAY 14, 2009	SEOUL JAN. 1, 2009–APRIL 30, 2009	PARIS JAN. 1, 2009–MAY 14, 2009	ZURICH JAN. 1, 2009–APRIL 30, 2009	BEIJING JAN. 1, 2009–APRIL 30, 2009	HONG KONG JAN. 1, 2009–MAY 24, 2009	SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA FEB. 16, 2009–MARCH 31, 2009
\$303	\$365	\$369	\$372	\$455	\$505	\$544	\$754

 Fares displayed do not include fuel surcharge of \$45–\$226 each way on Sun and International routes. Select Sun routes do not have a fuel surcharge.

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Alleged pedophile detained on way to Canada

A Calgary-area man accused of running a pedophilia business out of his Thailand home was arrested in London Heathrow Airport on Monday on his way home to Canada. John Wrenshall, 62, is being held in the U.K. pending his extradition.

METRO CALGARY

Local



Gobbling up power

Alberta's thirst for power has never been greater. The province set an electricity-consumption record Monday around 6 p.m., reaching a new high of 9,806 megawatts, outpacing the previous standard set on Jan. 28 by 96 megawatts.

METRO CALGARY

STYLISTA Citytv

**Season Finale
8 Tonight**



Mustard Seed sees money for housing

NEIL MACKINNON
neil.mackinnon@metronews.ca

FUNDING Calgary's first affordable housing highrise is now halfway to reality.

Alberta's minister of Housing and Urban Affairs Yvonne Fritz cut the Mustard Seed a \$21,467,069 cheque yesterday, leaving the 19-storey, 224-unit affordable-housing highrise just \$21 million from being fully funded.

"It has been a long time waiting for this day," said Mustard Seed founder and CEO Pat Nixon.

Construction is slated to begin in August, and Fritz said the province is more than happy to put its money where its mouth is.

"It's also going to help Calgarians with job in a soft construction market," Fritz said.

"By next winter, we'll have 112 units that are hopefully well on their way to providing support through the Mustard Seed."

CJSW in need of CDs

KRISTA SYLVESTER
krista.sylvester@metronews.ca

It started as a frozen water line and ended with a flood and a missing portion of the alphabet.

CJSW Radio at the University of Calgary — 90.9 FM — had a flood yesterday after the water line above them in the cafeteria froze and ruptured, according to station manager Chad Saunders.

"We tried to move everything out of the way, but there was a lot of water damage to our album collection, mostly the pop and rock albums. The I's, J's, K's and O's had a lot of damage, too," Saunders said.

Saunders said luckily a few volunteers and students helped out with a quick response and they were able to get most of the computers out of the office before the music collection sustained major damage.

"It was a freak accident



Chad Saunders, station manager of CJSW, goes through what is salvageable after a flood destroyed a good chunk of music in the studio when a pipe burst over the station's record and CD collection.

Pipe-bursting floods

- The Calgary Fire Department has been busy responding to more than 30 pipe-burst-related floods.

with a lot of water," he added.

Saunders said they removed between 3,000 and 4,000 CDs from the music

library and expect half have water damage. He figures about 400 will be completely lost.

"A few local music stores

have stepped up, though, and offered some help, as did the school students' union and students. So for all the help, we are very thankful."

If anyone wants to help or donate from their music collection, they can call the station at 403-220-3902.

Santa paying kids on campus a visit

U OF C For the third year in a row, Santa is visiting the University of Calgary kids on campus.

Students living on campus with their children can make appointments for Santa to visit with a gift, given by the parents in advance. Sean Ryan, residence-life co-ordinator, said the event is fun and parents can tell Santa beforehand if the kids have been naughty or nice. Interested students can call 403-220-5749 or e-mail sryan@ucalgary.ca before Dec. 22.

METRO CALGARY

[metronews.ca](#)

WHAT'S ONLINE TODAY

Video Holiday banner bearing wishes from home heading to Kandahar at [metronews.ca/canada](#)

Read Caroline Kennedy making rivals for Senate seat nervous at [metronews.ca/world](#)



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Public Notice

Residential garbage collection Temporary holiday schedule changes

Dec. 23, 2008 – Jan. 2, 2009

Waste & Recycling Services wishes all Calgarians a happy and safe holiday season. As we wind down another year of operations, there are a few temporary residential garbage collection schedule changes in effect during the holiday season.

If you receive garbage collection service on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday, the following temporary changes will be in effect during the holiday season only. Collection of your garbage will happen one day earlier than normal until the end of 2008. We'll resume garbage collection on your regular collection day during the first week of January.

If you receive garbage collection service on Friday, there's no change to your collection schedule. You'll continue to receive service on Fridays during the holiday season.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
21	22 Tuesday collection happens today	23 Wednesday collection happens today	24 Thursday collection happens today	25 (Christmas Day – No garbage collection)	26 No change – Regular Friday collection day	27
28	29 Tuesday collection happens today	30 Wednesday collection happens today	31 Thursday collection happens today	1 (New Year's Day – No garbage collection)	2 No change – Regular Friday collection day	3

Commercial garbage collection - There are no changes to commercial garbage collection schedules during the holiday season.

Recycling depot operations - There are no changes to recycling depot operations during the holiday season.

City of Calgary landfills - City of Calgary landfills will be closed on Dec. 25, 2008 and Jan. 1, 2009.

2008-2624

calgary.ca | call 3-1-1



4 local

Nominate neighbours Calgarians are invited to nominate citizens who have helped make this a dynamic city for a Calgary Award. Nominations can be made before March 6, 2009, at www.calgary.ca/calgaryawards. METRO CALGARY



Jay Baydala of Christmas Future shows off his website where people can find alternative Christmas gifts for their loved ones.

Give the gift of ... giving

CHARITY What do you get for that person on your list who already has everything they want?

How about a charity gift card through Christmas Future?

"Instead of getting a sweater for someone who really doesn't want another sweater, but still following in gift-giving tradition, get them a gift card to donate to a charity," founder of Christmas Future Jay Baydala said.

The concept is simple: Buy a gift card in any denomination and the receiver can go online and choose from numerous projects going on in developing countries to donate to.

"It's meaningful, it's like giving someone something in the form of a gift in which they can turn around and give to someone who really needs it," he said.

Baydala sold his condo, two vehicles and possessions to live simple and in-

vest in Christmas Future to help people in North America give to people in developing countries.

"It's a gift that can literally change the world," he said. "It really goes to some of the poorest people in the world and makes a difference in their lives."

Visit www.christmasfuture.org to purchase a gift card or look through the many projects going on around the world.

KRISTA SYLVESTER/METRO CALGARY

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After numerous Calgary-area schools were forced to close Monday due to the cold weather, Prince of Peace Lutheran School on Garden Road in Calgary had to close yesterday because of mechanical problems. METRO CALGARY

Cold keeps pooches indoors

KRISTA SYLVESTER
krista.sylvester@metronews.ca

Judging by the dozens of warmly dressed dogs and owners at the dog park yesterday, it was a long, cold few days stuck in the house.

It was still cold yesterday, but not too cold for Anne Rhodes and her two Beagles, Pippa and Riley, to finally get out of the house for a walk at the Southland

Dog Park in the afternoon.

"I had to buy them some extra treats to keep them busy in the house; they were getting a bit restless," Rhodes said.

Rhodes said the breed of her dogs means they gain weight easily so it's important — even in the cold — to bring them out for exercise.

"Today, they aren't so bad. I think they are just happy to be out of the house," she added.

Limitations

- Bylaw and Animal Services director Bill Bruce said owners just need to know their dogs and their limitations. "Long-haired dogs certainly have a higher tolerance than a short-hair dog," Bruce advised.

Lisa Santos brought her sister's two-year-old Doberman Talon out to play, as she, too, was house-ridden

since the deep cold hit the city.

"She is just enjoying running around today and she didn't seem to be lifting her paws," Santos said.

Santos said she has boots, a neck warmer for her ears and a jacket for the extreme cold.

"When it was really cold, she just went outside to do her business. But now it's a bit warmer, so I just wanted to bring her out for a bit."



Lisa Santos walks her two-year-old Doberman pinscher, Talon, at the Southland off-leash park. Bitterly cold weather has kept some dogs and owners indoors.

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Sex workers face violence: Expert

KRISTA SYLVESTER
krista.sylvester@metronews.ca

MARCH Jayme knows the stigmatism surrounding the sex-trade industry, but she knows the dangers within the industry even more.

That's why she chooses to withhold her last name, and on today, International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers, she chooses to speak up.

"Working in the escort industry, I think there is a misconception that it's safe because it's in a somewhat controlled environment, but it can be scary, too," she said, knowing she won't get much sympathy.

"Yes, some of us choose this industry, but we still have a right to be treated with respect, without violence," she added.

Roseline Carter, Shift program co-ordinator for AIDS Calgary, said only 10 per

"It's a dangerous industry to work in, even indoors, because of the isolation. Sex workers are still human beings that have basic human rights."

Roseline Carter

cent of the sex trade work on the street, while the other 90 per cent work indoors.

"It's a dangerous industry to work in, even indoors, because of the isolation. Sex workers are still human beings that have basic human rights," Carter said.

Today at 5 p.m., there will be a march to honour those who have lost their lives to sex-trade violence and raise awareness. The walk begins at Stephen Avenue and 4 Street SW.

Weather hampers school buses

DELAYS The Calgary Board of Education sent out a release yesterday concerning the reliability of information that bus companies submit on the website myschoolbusmonitor.ca, which lists school bus delays and anticipated wait times for pickup.

Recent severe weather conditions and difficult roadways has created several challenges for charter bus companies serving the

CBE, and because of this the board would like parents to know that the information provided on the My School Bus Monitor website may not be accurate for the rest of the week.

Parents should make arrangements for transportation and also have a plan in place in case buses do not arrive at the scheduled time.

METRO CALGARY

News in brief

CRIME City cops are looking for a suspect after a Mac's in the 1900 block of Sirocco Dr. SW was robbed by a man with a gun around 4:45 a.m. yesterday. Police are looking for an Asian male between 18 and 25 years old, 6-foot, with a baklava and black clothing. He had a strong Asian accent.

THEFT STATS Auto theft in the city is on the decline, but Calgary is still ranked fifth-highest among Canadian cities in car theft, according to a Statistics Canada report. The report released this week says there are 639 car thefts for every 100,000 citizens. Edmonton was ranked third in Canada. METRO CALGARY

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Ottawa library lends electronically
Capitalizing on the strong sales of portable e-book readers in the nation's capital, the Ottawa Public Library has started lending e-books over its website. **CBC NEWS ONLINE**

Canada

Reports differ on missing UN envoy

FFR statement

• "Even if identical movements active in the Tillabery region which adhere to the FFR's ideals may have taken the Canadian diplomat, the

FFR cannot take responsibility for this act," FFR President Mohamed Ag Aoutchiki Kriska said in a statement released on his group's website.

evening 45 km northeast of the capital Niamey.

The engine of the U.N. vehicle was still running, they said.

A first posting yesterday on the FFR website, signed by FFR's commissioner for war Rhissa Ag Boula said the group's fighters were holding four people, including Fowler.

"On December 15, 2008, fighters of the Front des Forces de Redressement

(FFR) carried out a commando operation in the Tillabery region in which we detained four people including a Canadian diplomat, Mr. Robert Fowler," the posting said.

A subsequent posting hours later by FFR president Mohamed Ag Aoutchiki Kriska denied the group was holding Fowler, but acknowledged he could have been abducted.

REUTERS

Chrysler will be 'treated differently'

BALLOUT Rescue cash for Chrysler will have strict terms to prevent the privately-owned automaker from taking advantage of Canadian taxpayers, warns Ontario's economic development minister.

"Chrysler will have to be treated differently," Michael Bryant said yesterday.

He promised the Detroit Three automakers will get the life-saving financial "CPR" they need to prevent the eventual loss of more than 500,000 jobs in Ontario predicted in a new study if General Motors, Ford and Chrysler were to go bust.

But there will be strings attached, particularly with Chrysler, which has major assembly operations in Brampton and Windsor, Ont.

Cerberus

- Chrysler's American parent is controlled by Cerberus Capital Management LP, a New York-based firm that manages \$27 billion US in assets and has been under fire in Washington for not putting more of its own money into the faltering automaker.

CFB Trenton **Soldiers mourned**



FRED THORNHILL/REUTERS

Family members of Pte. Justin Jones embrace as the hearse carrying Jones' casket arrives at Canadian Forces Base Trenton yesterday. The casket of Jones arrived with those of Cpl. Thomas Hamilton and Pte. John Curwin. Since 2002, 103 Canadian soldiers have died in Afghanistan. Go to metronews.ca/canada for more information.

News in brief

SEIZURE Newfoundland and Labrador will expropriate AbitibiBowater Inc.'s timber and hydroelectric assets when the company closes its mill there next year, Premier Danny Williams said, adding he's returning the province's resources to the people.

HALIFAX A teen who helped trap and torture a girl for four hours last June won't spend time behind bars, because he helped carry the victim home. A judge said yesterday the conflicting behaviour shows how he was pressured "to go against his nature."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Northland Village
Shawnessy Village
Southcentre Mall

Southcentre Mall (kiosk)

Southpointe Shopping Centre

Sunridge Mall
Westbrook Mall (kiosk)

CANMORE
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10157 - 101 St.
12804 82nd St.
14808 Stony Plain Rd.
18563 Stony Plain Rd.
Bonnie Doon
Edmonton City Centre
Edmonton City Centre (kiosk)

Kingsway Garden Mall
Londonderry Mall
Mill Woods Town Centre
Northgate Centre (kiosk)
Sherwood Park Mall
South Edmonton Common
South Park Centre
Southgate Mall (kiosk)
St. Albert Centre
St. Albert Trail at 137th Ave.
West Edmonton Mall
Westmount Centre
Whyte Avenue at 107th St.

EDSON
330 45th St.

FORT MCMURRAY
19 Riedel St.

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Prairie Mall

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SmartCentres Lethbridge
Park Place

LLOYDMINSTER
Peter Pond
Shopping Centre

MEDICINE HAT
Carry Drive Plaza
Medicine Hat Mall (kiosk)

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Consul general to return to Poland after drunk-driving allegations made

B.C. The Polish consul general in Vancouver is being recalled amid allegations he had three times the legal limit of alcohol in his blood stream when his car collided with a firetruck.

Consul General Tomasz Lis was arrested following the crash Friday afternoon and is expected to return to Poland shortly, according to Sylwia Domisiewicz, the second secretary of press and protocol for the Polish

Embassy in Ottawa.

Polish Foreign Affairs Minister Radek Sikorski has decided to suspend Lis, Domisiewicz told CBC News yesterday.

Vancouver police would not confirm Lis was involved in any accidents or might have been arrested, but a spokesman did say a late-model black Volvo rear-ended a fire truck on Robson Street in downtown Vancouver on Friday afternoon. **CBCNEWSONLINE**

News in brief

COURT A Canadian judge tossed out a lawsuit yesterday that claimed the country's prostitution laws were uncon-

stitutional, ruling a group of former and current prostitutes did not have the legal standing to sue. **REUTERS**

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A gondola tower at Whistler Blackcomb sheared in half yesterday stranding about a dozen skiers and snowboarders for several hours. No one was seriously injured, but five people were taken to receive medical aid. The incident occurred on the Excalibur gondola near Fitzsimmons Creek, B.C. **METRO CANADA**

Once-confident Canada now awash in economic gloom

A little over two months ago, Prime Minister Stephen Harper assured Canadians the economy was well placed to deal with the global recession and dismissed talk of budget deficits.

That relatively upbeat era is now over, washed away by an ever-widening river of gloom, stark language, pleas for help and relentlessly negative data.

"The truth is, I've never seen such uncertainty in terms of looking forward ... I'm very worried about the Canadian economy," Harper told CTV television Monday. "Obviously, we're going to have to run a deficit."

His comments further eroded dwindling stocks of optimism in a country where you cannot escape predictions of doom.

Statistics Canada releases a steady stream of downbeat reports and barely a week goes by without an industry group forecasting calamity unless governments step in to help.

Harper's language has changed from the moment in mid-September when he



Prime Minister Stephen Harper's assessment of the Canadian economy has changed over the past few months.

dismissed talk of a recession.

In October, he said, "I remain fundamentally optimistic about the Canadian economy," yet since then has sounded steadily less optimistic.

John Clinkard, chief economist at Deutsche Bank in Canada, said Harper had

been reacting to the best information he had available at the time.

"There has been a change, and so the information he took back in September has changed significantly and the clouds are much more ominous," Clinkard said yesterday.

"To be fair, among G7 countries we are the least impacted to date," he added. He did note, however, that his own forecasts for next year had become significantly more pessimistic in the last month.

There is certainly no shortage of downbeat predictions.

Montreal-based Laurentian Bank yesterday issued its 2009 outlook for the Canadian economy, saying it "will face challenges far more demanding than those in previous years."

Both Laurentian and Clinkard pointed to the recent sharp fall in the cost of a barrel of oil as a problem. Canada is a major exporter of energy.

Clinkard forecast the lower oil price would hit Canada's terms of trade.

"The impact of the terms of trade on Canada's growth has been very positive up until now," he said.

"We're going to lose that, so that will I think have a very significant impact on domestic demand which ... has kept this economy alive, basically."

REUTERS

Toronto Strikers hop downtown



Members of CUPE and York University students took their protest to Toronto's Bay Street yesterday to push for negotiations with the university to resume. Nearly 50,000 students have been out of class since the strike began Nov. 6.

Edmonton cop on desk duty pending charge outcome

ACCUSATIONS An Edmonton police constable was relieved of his patrol duties and placed into an administrative position yesterday after being accused of physically assaulting a man he arrested.

The constable, 29-year-old Haoyin Zheng, was charged with assault and assault with a weapon after a 51-year-old man was arrested for an alleged auto theft near 105 Avenue and 145 Street around 3 a.m.

Edmonton Police spokesman Jeff Wuite says Zheng, who has been with the Edmonton Police Service for more than two years, will remain in the administrative position "until a decision is made in court."

"Since the matter is in the courts, there isn't really much we can say."

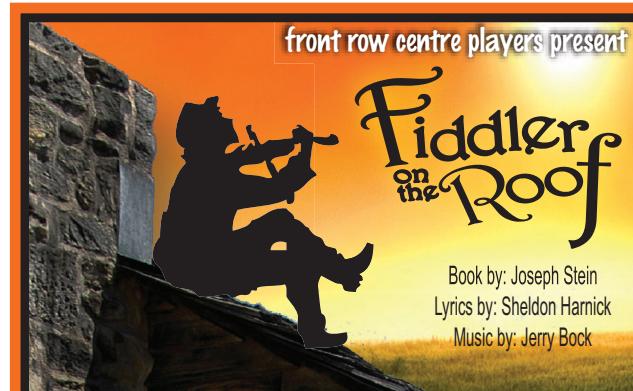
Jeff Wuite

"Since the matter is in the courts, there isn't really much we can say," said Wuite in a voice mail.

Wuite says the charge stems from another officer who witnessed the alleged attack and it was investigated "by the police service's professional standards branch."

Zheng is expected to make his first appearance in an Edmonton courtroom Feb. 17.

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OPEC oil ministers lined up yesterday to back what would be the group's biggest output cut as crude prices fell further. Saudi Arabia was first to publicly support a reduction of two-million barrels per day ahead of OPEC's meeting today. That figure was swiftly endorsed by other group members. **REUTERS**



Madoff unlikely to oust Ponzi in lingo

Bernard Madoff may have to wait awhile before his name becomes a term in the popular lexicon and bumps off "Ponzi," which has become shorthand for financial fraud. Madoff's name is already being used for puns, such as, "He Made-off with my money," following his arrest last week on fraud charges in what investigators said was a "Ponzi" scheme that cost his investors \$50 billion US.

REUTERS

World

France Student protest



French high school students shout slogans during a demonstration in Paris yesterday, the day after French Education Minister Xavier Darcos announced he would indefinitely delay a reform of the secondary school curriculum after protests by pupils turned violent last week. The placard reads Withdraw the Darcos Reform.

News in brief

DISEASE Eastern China's Jiangsu province has culled 377,000 poultry after laying hens tested positive for the H5N1 bird flu virus, the Ministry of Agriculture said yesterday, in the first reported case since the early summer.

PIRACY The UN Security Council yesterday authorized countries fighting piracy off the Somali coast to take action also on Somalia's territory and in its airspace, subject to approval by the country's government.

REUTERS

Italy pursues 100 mobsters

"If Cosa Nostra was on its knees after operation Gotha in June 2006, then with operation Perseus it has been prevented from getting up again."

Pietro Grasso

tortion, trafficking arms and drugs, and having mafia links.

They are suspected of trying to recreate the top-level Cosa Nostra body responsible for taking important decisions, with the support of Matteo Messina Denaro, one of the most

powerful godfathers on the run.

"If Cosa Nostra was on its knees after operation Gotha in June 2006, then with operation Perseus it has been prevented from getting up again," said Italy's anti-mafia prosecutor Pietro Grasso.

Italian police have inflicted major blows on the Sicilian mafia with arrests of several high-profile mafiosi in recent years, such as the "boss of bosses," Bernardo Provenzano, in 2006 and his heir apparent, Salvatore Lo Piccolo, in 2007.

Young Sicilians have also been leading efforts to rally local business people into resisting payment of the "pizzo," or protection money that helps fund the Mafia's activities.

REUTERS

Dozens of Russian tourists die in Israel bus crash

FATALITIES An Israeli bus full of newly arrived Russian tourists veered off a desert road and plunged down a ravine yesterday, killing at least 24 people and seriously injuring about a dozen more.

The crash, in the desert north of the Israeli Red Sea resort of Eilat, was one of the worst Israeli road accidents in years.

Soldiers, police and res-

"I saw people flying out of the windows as the bus rolled down the slope."

Witness to the crash

cue workers rushed to the scene and army helicopters helped evacuate dozens of injured survivors.

"I saw people flying out of the windows as the bus rolled down the slope,"

said one driver who witnessed the crash.

Bodies, baggage and bits of wreckage were scattered over the steep slope down from the highway, and the bus lay on its side on the rocky desert floor.

An officer shouted orders through a bullhorn as stretcher teams laid out a long line of white plastic body bags. Israel's Airport Authority said the victims had just arrived from St. Petersburg at Ovda airport, which serves Eilat. A police source said they were Russian tourists. An official at the Russian Embassy in Tel Aviv said he had no confirmed information. **REUTERS**

Greek PM pledges to fight corruption after protests

UNREST Greek Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis pledged yesterday to tackle corruption after 11 days of violence triggered by the police killing of a teenager and fuelled by public anger at scandals and a slowing economy.

About 100 youths attacked a police station in Athens, setting fire to a bus and four cars belonging to officers. Students

briefly occupied the state TV station, interrupting the news, and violence flared in the northern city of Thessaloniki.

Karamanlis said helping Greeks — a fifth of whom live in poverty — was a priority, but his options were restricted by the country's onerous debt, made worse by the riots that quickly spread across Greece.

REUTERS

Pakistan eyes crackdown after Mumbai attacks: Kerry

EFFORTS The attacks in the Indian city of Mumbai last month have convinced Pakistani leaders of the need for a serious crackdown on the Pakistan-based group Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), U.S. Senator John Kerry said yesterday.

India has accused LeT of involvement in the November attacks that killed 179 people.

Pakistani security forces

have detained more people than India was aware of in a sweep that began a little over a week ago, and the government was intent on convicting anyone linked to the Mumbai attacks, Kerry said.

Kerry was visiting Pakistan after a trip to India as part of an effort to reduce tensions between the two rivals.

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Epilepsy drugs linked to suicidal thoughts, officials say

Makers of epilepsy drugs must add a warning that the medicines carry a risk of suicidal thoughts, health officials said yesterday. **REUTERS**

world 13

Police close books on murder of six-year-old Adam Walsh

Adam Walsh, the six-year-old son of television crime show host John Walsh, was kidnapped and killed 27 years ago by a drifter who later died in jail, police in Florida said yesterday in closing the books on one of America's best-known unsolved crimes.

The gap-toothed boy, famously pictured holding a baseball bat and wearing a red cap, went missing from the toy department of a mall in Hollywood, Fla., in July 1981. His head was found in a canal two weeks later, but his body was never found.

Hollywood police announced yesterday that Ottis Toole, a longtime suspect in the Walsh killing, was in fact the murderer. Toole died in prison in 1996.

"For 27 years we've been asking, 'Who could take a

"Who could take a six-year-old boy and murder him and decapitate him? Who?"

John Walsh, boy's father and crime show host

six-year-old boy and murder him and decapitate him? Who?" John Walsh said at a news conference. "We needed to know. We needed to know. And today we know.

"The not knowing has been torture," he added. "But that journey's over."

Hollywood police said they had decided to end the investigation and declare Toole was the killer after a thorough review of records.

The murder of Adam Walsh galvanized a movement to protect children from predators. John Walsh became a leading voice for missing and exploited children and

founded the Adam Walsh Child Resource Centre.

He became the host of America's Most Wanted, a TV show that debuted in 1988 to publicize and help capture fugitive crime suspects.

President George W. Bush signed the Adam Walsh Child Protection Act in 2006 to establish a national sex-offender registry and to make it more difficult for predators to reach children on the Internet.

Toole was a partner of notorious serial killer Henry Lee Lucas and confessed to scores of murders. He admitted to killing Adam Walsh, but later recanted.

REUTERS

News in brief

CRIME An American anti-kidnapping expert who was abducted last week in northern Mexico was likely snatched by drug traffickers seeking to pro-

tect their turf, police said yesterday.

TERRORISM Police found explosives hidden in one of Paris's busiest department

stores yesterday after receiving a tip from a previously unknown group demanding the withdrawal of French troops from Afghanistan. **REUTERS**

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House-hunters in California
November home sales in Southern California jumped 26.9 per cent from a year earlier as bargain-hunters snapped up foreclosed properties. **REUTERS**

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Talks break down

N. Korea not willing to commit to inspections

North Korea, which is resisting verification of its atomic programs, should not expect the incoming Obama administration to offer easier terms, the top U.S. nuclear negotiator said yesterday.

Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill said talks in Beijing last week broke down over North Korea's unwillingness to commit to inspections and other steps that are "standard the world over" when verifying nuclear disarmament.

Tough talk

- North Korea responded with a threat to slow dismantlement of its main nuclear plant after Washington said energy aid to Pyongyang would be suspended without a verification accord.

He said it was not clear whether the reclusive state was afraid of embarrassing revelations about its nuclear activities or merely waiting for the transfer of power from President

George W. Bush to Barack Obama on Jan. 20.

"I would be frankly surprised if they're going to get some better deal from the next administration," Hill said in remarks to the Asia Society in Washington.

Obama has voiced support for efforts by Japan, Russia, China, the U.S. and South Korea to talk North Korea into dropping its nuclear-arms ambitions, but he has criticized Bush for failing to try high-level diplomacy with Pyongyang.

REUTERS

Exec limits adequate: Official

BALLOUT A top U.S. Treasury official denied yesterday that the limits on executive compensation included in the government's financial rescue plan were too weak to have any effect.

The Washington Post reported Monday that the legislation limiting compensation for bankers was rendered toothless by a clause included by the Treasury in the legislation. Under the loophole, only firms that sold assets to the Treasury

via an auction would be subject to pay restrictions.

The department has since scrapped the use of auctions in its Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP), rendering useless the restrictions on executive pay.

But Treasury undersecretary for International Affairs David McCormick said there were other provisions within TARP to prevent leaders of failed banks from running off with golden parachutes.

REUTERS

News in brief

SMUGGLING Iraqi officials have seized 228 ancient artifacts, some looted from Iraq's National Museum, which smugglers intended to take out of the country. The senior military commander of Basra, 420 km southeast of Baghdad, said officials had arrested seven men yesterday. Thousands of priceless antiquities belonging to Iraq — which is known by historians as the cradle of civilization — were looted in the aftermath of the U.S.-led invasion in 2003.

REUTERS



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UN, Cuba agree on GDP calculation adjustment
A key United Nations commission has agreed after several years of dispute with Cuba to include social investment in calculations of the communist-run country's gross domestic product, a Cuban official said yesterday. **REUTERS**

News in brief

CONFlict Israel killed a Palestinian militant yesterday in the occupied West Bank and launched at least one air strike against rocket-launching crews in the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip. A six-month-old ceasefire between Hamas and Israel expires Friday, and tension along Israel's border with the Gaza Strip has soared. Hamas has refused to extend the Egyptian-brokered truce. **REUTERS**

Illinois inquiry begins

Illinois lawmakers opened an impeachment inquiry into Gov. Rod Blagojevich yesterday, saying they would look at years of questionable activities including last week's charge that he tried to sell the U.S. Senate seat vacated by president-elect Barack Obama.

The head of the biparti-

san committee said Blagojevich's lawyer would attend the panel's next hearing today.

Blagojevich, a Democrat, was arrested and charged a week ago with scheming to trade the vacant Senate seat and political favours for campaign cash and jobs.

The governor has denied

doing anything wrong and refused calls from within his own party to resign. His lawyer, Edward Genson, said yesterday they would fight the charges.

"The case that I've seen so far is significantly exaggerated. It's not what people think it is," Genson said. **REUTERS**

Holes letting solar wind in

The Earth's protective magnetosphere has two large holes that are letting in disruptive solar winds, scientists said yesterday.

Understanding how these holes form will help them better predict the electrical storms that cause power-grid blackouts and the aurora, activity that will peak in 2012 as sunspots hit their maximum level. **REUTERS**

New view

- Findings presented at the American Geophysical Union meeting in San Francisco show that 20 times more solar particles enter the Earth's magnetic field when it is aligned in the same direction as the sun's magnetic field — opposite to what scientists believed.



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Comment & Views

Comment

Winter wonderland

Vancouverites wondering what happened to global warming

TheWestView

Paul Sullivan

Journalist & Media Consultant

've had it with all the complaining from the Prairies about the alleged "deep freeze" they're enduring.

Cold it may be, but they're used to it. They even have those little plug things sticking out of the front end of their combines to keep them nice and warm. And I understand they have to wear long underwear between October and April or face a stiff fine.

Those people are prepared.

Here in Vancouver, however, it's only going up to zero today, (gasp!) and these Arctic conditions have taken us completely by surprise. It's a state of emergency. Our local competitor, the Vancouver Sun, is so swept up in the

general panic, yesterday morning's front page featured a 200-point headline warning: "Get ready for 10 days below zero."

Below the fold there's an entirely serious piece from star columnist Pete Martin sternly taking the Environment Canada guy to task for failing to predict a five-centimetre snowfall. It's a scandal!

But we ain't seen nothin' yet. According to the long-term forecast from Accuweather, cold records could be smashed over the next few days. The overnight temperature could plummet to -11 C. The chastened Environment Canada guy has been forced to admit there may even be more snow coming.

Whatever happened to global warming?

Laugh you

may, but this is a city that practises annual winter denial. The beaches and sidewalk cafés are busy (thanks to those industrial-grade heaters), and every year we wait for a mild day and dash out with the lawn mower and the camera so we can send our hapless eastern relatives pictures of us mowing the lawn in December.

There will be no lawns mowed this December. We may even — wait for it —

be forced to endure a white Christmas and all the hoo-hah that goes with it.

Of course, our dirty little secret is that it snows every winter in Vancouver; at least it has since I've lived here — nearly 20 years. It usually lasts for a couple days and then the rain comes and mercifully washes it all away. But every time it snows, you'd think it was the first time. We crash into each other with reckless abandon,

close all the schools and lose power, forced to huddle in the dark by candlelight until it blows over.

One day, perhaps, we'll all go, "Oh!" and buy hats and mitts and shovels and get on with it.

In the meantime, if this year's Christmas card includes a photo of Uncle Fred mowing his lawn in December, be suspicious. Be very suspicious.



Paul Sullivan is a Vancouver-based journalist and owner of Sullivan Media Consulting.

Word on the street: Would Michael Ignatieff make a better prime minister than Stephen Harper?

Fabienne Chery

age 20, Calgary

A: Michael who? Whoever he is he can't be worse than Harper. (Harper) wasn't very bright right after the last election.



Greg Porter

age 30, Calgary

A: In Canadian politics right now, it's really a pick your poison kind of thing. I don't think anything will change no matter who's in power.



Laura Fitzpatrick

age 24, Bedford, N.S.

A: I don't know a lot about him, but anything is better than Harper. I am not for the Conservatives.



Alexandra Ma

age 17, Toronto

A: (Ignatieff). Mainly because I don't like Stephen Harper's view on things and the direction he's leading our country.



Nick Lopardo

age 24, Vancouver

A: Yes, I think he would. I'm not too pleased about the job the Conservatives have done. I'm also glad the Liberals have a new leader.



Craig Davison

age 38, Ottawa

A: My issue with Ignatieff is that I don't consider him Canadian... It seems like he's come back with the sole objective of meeting some political desire of his.



Letters

Canada is not a colony tied to the mother country

Re: Are we a colony? (Dec. 16)

Enough already! Do we have to hear from every pompous pundit on the pros and cons of our constitutional monarchy form of government? Is it out of sheer ignorance of how the system works, mean-spirited criticism or simple lack of anything interesting to say that people such as Mr. Martin keep bringing up the Queen and her representative, the governor general, in relation to Harper's pathetic fiasco of the past few weeks?

Get over it, gentlemen. Canada is not a colony tied to the mother country, and the Queen is not a foreign monarch.

JOHN TAGG, TORONTO

Elephants need to be protected from zoos

A new study (Dec. 12) showing that elephants die early in captivity has generated the predictable zoo industry denials. Officials in Canada and the U.S. claim the report is flawed and conditions in North American zoos today are

different from those surveyed for the study.

The stark, undersized elephant exhibits in Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton or in most any other Canadian or American zoo should be enough to convince anyone that things are just as bad here in North America.

It's clear that elephants don't need to be protected by zoos, they need to be protected from zoos.

ROB LAIDLAW, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ZOOCHECK CANADA

Quebec taken to task over naming of tree

Shame on the Liberals in Quebec to entertain such petty issues (Christmas tree or holiday tree) when the country is in recession.

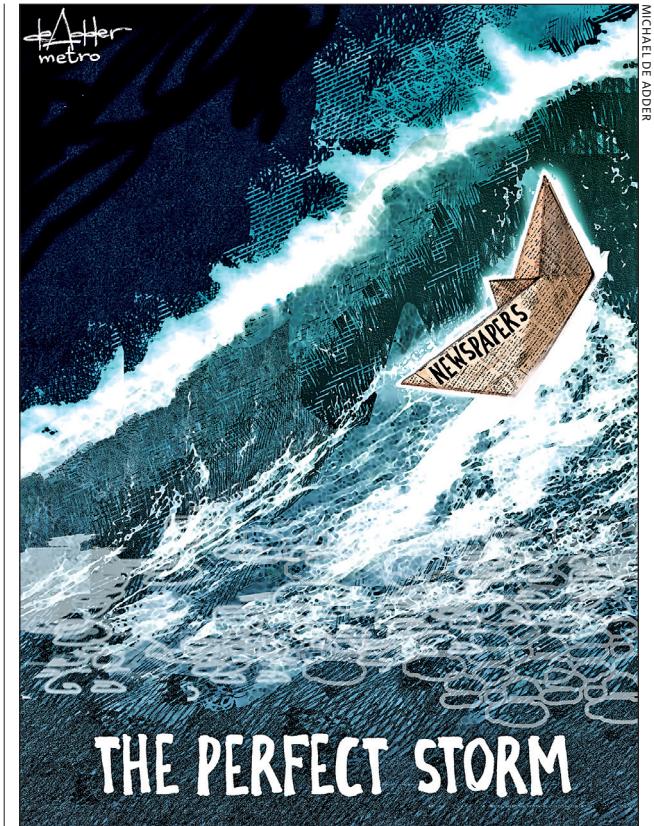
I come from a country where there are only four per cent Christians, yet we never thought of changing the name of the Christmas season to holiday season or Christmas tree to holiday tree.

One need not compromise or change their religious values to accommodate people of other religions. Calling a Christmas tree a holiday tree is very offensive.

BINDU MATHEW, TORONTO

It's your turn to tell others what you think. E-mail your thoughts and opinions to: calgaryletters@metronews.ca

Letters must include sender's full name, address and phone number — street name and phone numbers will NOT be published. We reserve the right to edit letters.



A nude model resembling the Virgin Mary on the cover of the Mexican edition of Playboy — published days before a major pilgrimage to Mexico City's Virgin of Guadalupe shrine — prompted an apology from the magazine's U.S. headquarters. **REUTERS**

Business

EDITOR: FERMIN DESOUZA, FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

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Alberta mulls \$1.8B in wind power lines

Wind-power developments planned in Alberta will require \$1.83 billion in new transmission lines to connect the electricity to markets, the province's system operator said yesterday.

The Alberta Electric System Operator (AESO) is recommending construction of a 240 kilovolt loop system to connect 2,700 megawatts of electricity to be generated by wind farm projects planned for the province's south over the next decade.

AESO said it expects the system to be built in three phases with the first stage expected to cost \$750 million and handle 1,200 megawatts of wind power.

The next two phases are

estimated to cost \$800 million and \$280 million, respectively, and will be built when needed.

The system operator said it expects to file for provincial regulatory approval of the transmission plan by the end of the year.

If regulators approve the proposal, the AESO can ask AltaLink, the private company that operates the bulk of Alberta's electricity transmission, to build the new lines, though further regulatory approvals would be needed before construction could begin.

Alberta currently has 497 megawatts of wind-generated electricity on its transmission system, the system operator said.

REUTERS

Aid should reach \$13B: Experts

ECONOMY The federal government should pump \$10 billion to \$13 billion in additional spending into the flagging economy in 2009 to help pull the country out of a steep downturn, even though it could result in a deficit of \$20 billion or more, think-tank Conference Board of Canada says. It argued that going into

the red "is a price worth paying for an expedited economic recovery and a return of consumer and investor confidence."

Since rate cuts will take 18 months to kick in, banks haven't fully passed these cuts on and credit is still tight, "fiscal policy must ride to the rescue," it said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Telus CFO has no plans to buy BCE

TELECOM Telus Corp. is not pursuing a merger with bigger rival BCE Inc., Telus's chief financial officer Robert McFarlane said yesterday.

"We're just focused on executing our business plan," he said, a week after the BCE buyout collapsed. "We're not working on an acquisition of BCE." REUTERS

In brief

STOCKS U.S. stocks accelerated gains yesterday after the Federal Reserve's interest-rate cut and a smaller-than-feared loss from Goldman Sachs.

LAYOFFS Quebecor Inc.'s newspaper unit Sun Media said yesterday it will cut 600 jobs, or 10 per cent of its workforce, because of the economic downturn and problems in the print media industry. REUTERS

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Manning brothers going to Pro Bowl

Peyton and Eli Manning were voted to the Pro Bowl yesterday, the first time quarterback-playing brothers have been chosen for the same all-star game. The New York Jets led all teams with seven selections, including Brett Favre, who will be in his 10th Pro Bowl. There will be six each from the Giants, Vikings and Titans in the game, to be played Feb. 8 in Honolulu. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sports

SPORTS@METRONEWS.CA

Flames break skid in St. Louis

NHL RESULT**Flames 6 Blues 3**LAURENCE HEINEN
for Metro Calgary

THE SKINNY: Jarome Iginla broke out of a mini-slump with two goals and two assists to lead the Flames to their first win in four games.

THE CATALYST: The Flames are now 11-1 this season when Iginla finds the back of the net. The Calgary captain needs just one point to reach the 800-point plateau for his career.

THE FLUKE: With Iginla falling to the ice and yelling for a penalty to be called, Cory Sarich's point shot hit him in the arm and stuck past St. Louis goalie



Blues goalie Chris Mason blocks a shot by David Moss last night.

Chris Mason for the game's opening goal.

Ileri scored once and set up another; while Sarich and Craig Conroy each had a pair of assists.

BUSY NIGHT: Sarich also had two fights and finished with a plus-four rating.

THE NEXT GAME: The Flames wrap up a quick two-game road trip tonight when they face the Minnesota Wild (6 p.m., TSN, Fan 960).

Strings attached for Rautins

The coaches of the national men's and women's basketball teams have been put on notice — win or it's time to move on.

Leo Rautins and Allison McNeil have been given contract extensions — and some high-powered help from eras when the national teams were fixtures at the top international competitions — but only with the proviso that they get their teams to the 2010 world championships.

"Initially, that's difficult for a coach to accept, but as we walked through the potential of the new structure ... both were enthusiastic," Canada Basketball CEO Wayne Parrish said yesterday. The men's team hasn't been at a significant international event since the 2002 world championship and the women were 10th at the 2006 worlds, but have missed the last two Olympics. Both programs face FIBA Americas qualifi-

cation tournaments next summer with dates and sites still to be determined.

Rautins and McNeil will have a new group to bounce ideas off — and take advice from — as Canada Basketball has established a "council of excellence" that Parrish likened to a group of village elders. The nine-member panel includes Raptors senior VP Maurizio Gherardini and a host of names from Canadian basketball history. Three former men's team coaches — including Raptors coach Jay Triano — are included, as well as former women's team coaches Kathy Shields, Don McRae and Sylvia Sweeney, once one of the top players in the world. Two-time NBA MVP Steve Nash joins the council as an "honorary member."

"To say that our basketball community in our country has been splintered is an understatement," said Rautins. "To be able to put this council together and bring back people that have been part of the program, very major people in basketball in this country, is huge."



Leo Rautins blames a splintering in the Canadian basketball community for the national program's poor performance over the past six years.

TORSTAR
NEWS
SERVICE

Avery fiasco is out of whack

**John Chick**

john.chick@metronews.ca

This is how a neophyte could sum up the Sean Avery situation:

In the NHL, saying something stupid to a media scrum will get you suspended six games and lead your team to essentially release you. But if you hit somebody headfirst into the boards from behind (as Tom Kostopoulos did to Mike Van Ryn, giving Van Ryn a concussion) you get exactly half that suspension and not cut.

Obviously, it's a little deeper than that. It's clear Avery's teammates didn't want him back, and that was ultimately the reason for his dismissal.

That's fine. But on another level, the summary is still 100 percent correct. The hypocrisy of the NHL is one of the many reasons the sport has at times trailed poker and women's college softball in U.S. TV ratings. I'm not calling out Kostopoulos, either — his hit wasn't deliberate,

but it was arguably careless and did cause a serious injury. Meanwhile, nothing Avery has done — seeing as his persona non grata status is also the result of his laundry list of antics — ever threatened brain damage on another human being.

Let me be clear that I'm not defending what Avery said. At best, it was juvenile, at worst, misogynistic. When he called out the league for not having stars marketable in the U.S. last summer, of course he was smug and condescending. But he had a point.

It's no secret that the culture of hockey is vastly different from that of any other sport. That culture led Brendan Shanahan to once say there could never be a Dennis Rodman in the NHL. The Worm was probably an extreme example, but Shanahan was absolutely right.

And that's part of the reason why the NHL will continue to toil in the U.S. marketplace during a recession with a national TV deal that doesn't even guarantee it money. To suspend a player and then have the team get rid of him — for saying something that in any other sport would likely result in a fine and nothing else — may look wonderfully moralistic, but for an entertainment business to play

Bertuzzi, Moore meet

Todd Bertuzzi and Steve Moore met across a table Monday in Toronto as part of a court-ordered mediation in a \$38-million lawsuit Moore filed after Bertuzzi grabbed him from behind, punched him in the head and landed on top of him during a 2004 NHL game.

Moore, who was a member of the Colorado Avalanche at the time, suffered three fractured vertebrae in his neck and a concussion and hasn't played hockey since. "I think he's probably doing as well as to be expected under the circumstances," Toronto lawyer Tim Danson said of Moore his client, yesterday. "He still has to deal with the loss of his dream and that's a hard thing to come to grips with."

Bertuzzi's former coach Marc Crawford (then bench boss of the Vancouver Canucks, for whom

Bertuzzi played in 2004) and lawyers for all parties were also present. "All I can say is the mediation has taken place and it has concluded," the lawyer said.

Bertuzzi, the Canucks and the club's parent company are named as defendants in the suit filed by Moore and his family. The suit seeks lost income and damages.

Bertuzzi has said in legal documents that Crawford should be held responsible for any damages awarded to Moore. Crawford has claimed in other court documents that Bertuzzi disobeyed instructions to leave the ice in Vancouver before Moore was attacked.

Bertuzzi was charged with assault in June 2004 after a four-month investigation.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Furcal signs deal with Braves

MLB Free agent infielder Rafael Furcal has agreed a three-year deal to return to the Atlanta Braves, Major League Baseball said yesterday.

The 31-year-old will go back to Atlanta providing he passes a medical, MLB said on its website.

Furcal, who played for the Braves from 2000-05, spent the last three seasons as shortstop for the Los Angeles Dodgers but missed most of the 2008 campaign with a back injury.

Meanwhile, the Baltimore Orioles have signed free agent Cesar Izturis to a \$6 million two-year contract to fill their vacancy at shortstop, the team said yesterday.

REUTERS

SCOREBOARD

NHL

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

CALGARY 6 St. Louis 3
Atlanta 4 Ottawa 1
Carolina 3 Montreal 2
Dallas 2 Phoenix 1 (OT)
Toronto 3 New Jersey 2 (SO)
Philadelphia 5 Colorado 2
Washington 5 N.Y. Islanders 4 (OT)
Chicago 9 Edmonton 2
N.Y. Rangers at Anaheim

TONIGHT'S GAMES

New Jersey at Buffalo
San Jose at Columbus
Calgary at Minnesota
Edmonton at Vancouver
N.Y. Rangers at Los Angeles

Automotive

EDITOR: KUMAR SAHA, KUMAR.SAHA@METRONEWS.CA

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MINI E: The future's electric

Green car demonstrates the power of plug-ins at L.A. Auto Show

JIM ROBINSON
for Metro Canada

The MINI stand at the Los Angeles Auto Show is one of the last places I expected to find one of the biggest green car stories of the year, but that's what the MINI E is now.

While the Chevy Volt is still months, and perhaps now years away, BMW, which owns MINI, presented the electrically powered MINI E to the global media for the first time in Los Angeles.

Not merely a concept car, 500 MINI E vehicles will be shipped to California, New York and New Jersey for

testing with private and corporate customers.

MINI had a veritable fleet of them available for test drives and it proved eye opening, especially the acceleration which would leave many performance cars in the dust.

BMW is on record as stating it plans to be in series production in the mid-term of all-electric vehicles, starting with the MINI E, as part of the company's 'Number One' strategy.

The MINI E's electric drive produces a peak power of 204 hp and 162 lb/ft of torque that is routed to the front wheels through a single-stage helical gearbox.

On the street, the MINI E goes from 0-100 km/h in 8.5 seconds with an electronically limited top speed of 152 km/h.

Range is subjective but with 58 per cent power in the battery, I was told that was good for about 100 miles which I assume meant in-town, not highway.

The MINI E is based on the current hatchback model but will be offered only as a two-seater because the massive lithium-ion battery pack takes up the entire back seat and most of the rear cargo space leaving room for a small carry-on bag or two.

The lithium-ion storage



The MINI E is an all-electric two-seater that has a range of about 150-plus miles.



The MINI signature central gauge includes an LED display indicating power consumption in red and power recuperation in green.

unit has a maximum capacity of 35 kilowatt hours (kWh) and transmits energy to the electric motor as direct current at a nominal 380 volts. The rechargeable battery is made up of 5,088 cells grouped into 48 modules. These modules are packaged into three battery elements that are compactly arranged inside the MINI E.

According to the people I spoke with, a full recharge draws a maximum of 28-kilowatt hours of electricity from the grid. Roughly speaking, a kilowatt-hour translates into 5.4 miles for a total of about 150-plus miles depending on your driving habits.

Starting is basically the same as the MINI with an electronic key fob that is inserted into a slot on the dash and then a starter button is pushed.

There is no sound at startup. Pull the transmission mounted shifter back to Drive and you're ready to go, but don't hit the accelerator too hard because the MINI E takes off like a rocket. With 204 hp, it is about the same as the turbocharged MINI Cooper S but without any noise.

This interaction ensures a comfortable and smooth driving experience. In city traffic, some 75 per cent of all deceleration can be done without the brakes.

Making substantial use of this energy regeneration feature extends the car's range by up to 20 per cent.

Regenerative braking feels like a parachute being popped open. And each time you lift, the brake lights come on to warn

MINI E	
Type:	Luxury electric two-seater
Price:	Not available
HP:	204
Highlights	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All electric • Regenerative braking • Smooth ride 	

drivers behind you because the deceleration is so abrupt. You can get around it by left foot braking but that seriously lessens range because the whole system depends on as much regenerative power as possible.

A car like this in the city makes a believer in an electric future out of anyone. But Los Angeles is one thing and Canada is another.

How it would perform in the winter with the heater and lights on would be an issue, as anyone with electric heat at home will tell you.

But the great thing about the MINI E, and the "green" cars at the Los Angeles Auto Show, is that something is being done and there is a future for the automobile.

Mercedes BlueTEC a hit with celebrities

CLEAN CAR When Academy Award nominee Naomi Watts celebrated her 40th birthday in Los Angeles recently, her partner Liev Schreiber surprised her with a spectacular present: a Mercedes-Benz ML320 BlueTEC.

Liev and Naomi are among the many actors and musicians to discover the exceptional performance and efficiency of BlueTEC, the world's cleanest, state-of-the-art diesel technology.

Fellow BlueTEC clean diesel drivers from the

world of film and television include Desperate Housewives star Kyle McLaughlin, Sex and the City siren Kim Cattrall, Golden Globe Winner Gary Oldman, and Phantom of the Opera star and singer Emmy Rossum.

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A buyer's market in '09

AutoPilot

Michael Goetz
 Veteran auto journalist

Well, good day. The nice people at Metro have offered me this perch, so I might pontificate on automotive matters on a weekly basis.

I'll start with a warning: I sometimes get over-excited by car stuff and could spray spittle while I talk. If that happens, you might want to move back a bit.

Actually I won't really be pontificating (too much), as I hate being preached to as the next guy. I'm just going to throw out some news, views, trends, ideas, and stories your way, to contribute to the ongoing dialogue people just can't

All the automakers are ready to deal. The usual suspects will continue to discount, but they have been joined by brands, like Toyota and BMW, who were previously thought to have discount-resistant DNA.

stop having about vehicles, car culture, and driving. My fervent wish that one day it might be thought of as a good bottle of 5W30 synthetic — car talk lubrication you could count on.

And the topic for today is 2009.

Don't know if you've noticed, but there's this thing called the "Global Economic Crisis" and 2009 just might be the year the North American auto industry goes to hell in a hybrid hand basket. But for anybody contemplating a vehicle purchase, 2009 is shaping up really, really nicely.

For one thing, all the automakers are ready to deal. The usual suspects will continue to discount, but they have been joined by brands, like Toyota and

BMW, who were previously thought to have discount-resistant DNA.

Honda is probably the next convert, as it didn't match Toyota's recent reductions, and suffered the consequences, with poor sales during November and December.

And for all the talk of tight credit, we've yet to see that become a factor on the showroom floor. GM, Ford and Chrysler, will no longer use low monthly leasing rates to drive sales, because, well, because it almost killed them (through a combination of overly optimistic resale values and getting saddled with gangly vehicles that were a tough sell when crude was over 100 bucks a barrel).

But interest rates are still way low, and most au-

tomakers offer very attractive financing deals. Be cognizant, however, that some of these numbers are possible because the term of the loan has been pushed to five, six, or seven years.

Of course, the main attraction is the cars, and there is an unusually large number of intriguing new products and technologies to watch, and possibly secure for your driveway, in 2009.

This product expansion has been brought on by the push for global cars and green cars, low-sulphur diesel finally being available at North American pumps, and sheer panic on the part of the world's automakers. (Ever notice how wide awake you are, after you've had a sphincter moment?)

We'll look more closely at those automotive trends, and possibly a few more bodily functions, in future instalments of Auto Pilot.

Michael Goetz has been writing about cars and editing automotive publications for over 20 years. He lives in Toronto with his family and a neglected 1967 Jaguar E-type.



Punching out 525 hp and capable of speeds up to 196 mph, the Audi R8 is now available with a 5.2-litre V10 engine.

Audi strikes sports-car gold

Audi is sending shockwaves through the sports-car establishment yet again with the new R8 V10, a 10-cylinder, 525 hp, 196 mph evolution of the quattro four-wheel-driven sports car.

The new 5.2-litre FSI V10 gasoline engine mounted longitudinally directly behind the cockpit is almost identical in construction to the unit powering the recently announced R8 LMS that will race at customer level in the GT3 class.

It contributes only 31kg more to the overall weight of the all-aluminum-bodied R8 than the existing V8, taking it to 1,620kg, and making possible an impressive power-to-weight ratio of 324 hp per ton.

The direct injection engine rockets the R8 through the 62mph barrier in just 3.9 seconds as it revs freely to its 8,700rpm limit in each of its six ratios.

When linked to the R tronic transmission it can reach 124 mph in only 12 seconds, and in the right conditions can maintain its breathtaking momentum all the way to 196 mph, an unprecedented high for a road-going Audi.

By mounting the 10-cylinder unit as close as possible to the centre of the R8, Audi engineers have achieved near perfect 44 per cent front / 56 per cent rear weight distribution for optimum handling balance.

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Luck of the draw
According to Reuters, Las Vegas casinos won 26 per cent less money from gamblers in October than they did a year earlier. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Travel

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Getting an eyeful at NYC's Museum of Sex

This institution brings a whole new meaning to 'too much information'

While Manhattan is home to dozens of cultural museums dedicated to high-brow art, it has only one cultural institution where you can fondle a love doll, watch panda porn and learn about the sexual habits of the honey bee.

The Museum of Sex, which opened in 2002, claims to be the most "stimulating museum in New York." You can find a handful of sex museums scattered across Europe and Asia, but this one favours information rather than just titillation — specifically, it aims to "preserve and present the history, evolution and cultural significance of human sexuality."

Since the Museum of Sex, a.k.a MoSex, is set to spice up its permanent collection, I figured this was a good time to check it out.

The first — and certainly most interesting — of its three galleries contains an exhibit called The Sex Lives of Animals. Strolling amidst photo displays and anatomically correct statues of creatures mid-coitus, I learn that plenty of animals mate for reasons other than procreation.

Apparently, they engage in all sorts of acts for pleasure — just two of more memorable pursuits I learned about involved the West Indian manatee and the Gray whale, both of which indulge in some re-



The Museum of Sex — MoSex, for short — in New York City takes a scholarly approach to its subject.

TheTravelJunkie



thetraveljunkie.ca

MoSex

- For information on admission fees, hours and discounted tickets visit museumofsex.com.

ing back to the 1930s through burlesque flicks and modern day pornography.

Surprisingly, the most shocking things I saw were Pamela Anderson and Paris Hilton's explicit sex tapes. With videos like these, it's no wonder that visitors have to be at least 18 years old to enter the museum.

I dragged myself from the den of cinematic sin to the final gallery, a room filled with a mishmash of paraphernalia: squeezable latex love dolls, a nine-foot S&M suspension cage, anime videos, pinup posters and antique vibrators.

I leave the Museum of Sex with the following conclusions: One, human sexuality is complicated; two, our concepts of sex, norms and taboos are constantly changing; and three, West Indian manatees are having more sex than I am.

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Julia Dimon is co-host of Word Travels, airing on OLN, and editor of thetraveljunkie.ca.

Jack Black appears on The Office

Comedian Jack Black is set to guest star in hit show The Office. The actor will appear in an episode slated to air in February, right after the SuperBowl. [IMDB.COM](#)

23

Entertainment

**More Will**

Actor Will Smith is in talks to reprise two of his most successful recent movie roles in a Hancock sequel and a prequel to I Am Legend. [IMDB.COM](#)



Actor Billy Bob Thornton portrays a mall santa in the anti-Christmas film Bad Santa.

Anti-Christmas fun

Take a break from the well-wishing with these classics

PHIL BROWN
for Metro Canada



As we enter the last shopping week before the most commercial of all holidays, it's getting to be that special time of year when everyone gets a little sick of Christmas.

After all, you can only hear the high pitched squeal of the Chipmunks whining about wanting "a hula hoop" while you claw your way through the riotous mob of mall shoppers so many times before your holiday cheer turns into black bile.

Fortunately a number of filmmakers have developed their own antidotes to the Christmas season. Here are a few films you can watch when a break from all the

carolling and irritating well-wishing is needed.

- **THE REF:** Ted Demme may have died tragically young, but at least he gave us the finest anti-Christmas comedy before he left. Dennis Leary stars as a chain-smoking jewel thief who holds a dysfunctional family hostage on Christmas Eve. More holiday movies should have an emotional climax in which Kevin Spacey tells his mother, "You know what I'm going to get you next Christmas, Mom? A big wooden cross, so that every time you feel unappreciated for your sacrifices, you can climb on up and nail yourself to it."

- **BAD SANTA:** Director Terry Zwigoff says that he and his ghost screenwriters, the Coen brothers, used to describe Bad Santa as "the

Christmas movie only three Jews could make." Considering the fact that this film stars a foul-mouthed elf, a woman with a Santa fetish, and a safe-cracking mall Santa who gets drunk and pees his pants on the job, they've got a point.

- **DIE HARD:** It's not commonly discussed, but the movie that made Bruce Willis a star is not only set at Christmas but ends with a rendition of Let It Snow. If there's a better way of ringing in the holidays than watching Willis shoot Alan Rickman with a gun concealed on his back with tape that reads "Seasons Greetings," I haven't found it.

- **GREMLINS:** Joe Dante's mini-monster classic gleefully sends up the holiday with puppet monsters tear-

ing apart a Frank Capra-esque town on Christmas Eve. The scene in which the Gremlins take up caroling and Phoebe Cates' darkly comic monologue about the Christmas her father died while playing Santa can only be fully appreciated at the peak of a yuletide burnout.

- **BRAZIL:** Though not overtly about Christmas, Terry Gilliam's dystopian classic gleefully satirizes every element of 20th century excess; including the holiday season. The movie opens with a family huddled around the Christmas tree when an anti-terrorist swat team bursts through the ceiling and arrests the father at gunpoint. If a scene like that doesn't get you in the holiday spirit, nothing will.

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Twilight sequel harder, star says

MOVIES The surprise success of Twilight, the teen vampire movie that boasted a bigger opening North American weekend box office than the new James Bond, could make the sequel harder to sell, its leading actor said.

The film, based on the novel by Stephenie Meyer, made \$69.6 million US in movie theatres over its first weekend last month.

"We had nothing to lose in the first one," said actor Robert Pattinson, who became a movie heartthrob for his portrayal of immortal vampire Edward Cullen.

REUTERS

In brief

MUSIC A man accused of illegally posting songs on the Internet from an unreleased album by rock band Guns N' Roses has pleaded guilty and faces up to one year in prison, a prosecutor said. Kevin Cogill, 28, pleaded guilty to a copyright violation. The charge was reduced because he is cooperating with authorities. **REUTERS**

MUSIC Metallica has finally confirmed "the worst-kept secret in rock 'n' roll" and unveiled details of the upcoming Guitar Hero game devoted to the band. According to metallica.com the game "allows you to play as us in either single instrument or band career game modes." **REUTERS**

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Director Stephen Norrington has signed on to a remake of The Crow. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK



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24entertainment

Lamb's life after Oprah

By the summer of 1999, Wally Lamb was the best-selling author of two hugely popular novels. But his literary credentials didn't cut much ice with the tough crowd he encountered during a speaking engagement at York Correctional Facility, a women's prison in hard-scrabble eastern Connecticut.

"I doubt that more than one or two of them had read either of my books," recalled Lamb, during a Toronto stop last week to promote his newly published third title, *The Hour I First Believed*. "I found out after the fact that the only thing they were really interested in was seeing the dude who knew Oprah."

Lamb's 1992 debut *She's Come Undone* and the 1998 follow-up, *I Know This Much is True*, had both been selected for the influential TV host's book club, instantly turning the former high school teacher into a publishing phenomenon with an immense following.

"Somebody once said they love it when they see

the authors come out and sit on the couch with Oprah because we all look like the deer that got caught in the headlights," says Lamb, 58, a lifelong Connecticut resident. "Her endorsement is a boon and a blessing, but you also have to figure out how to deal with it. Suddenly you have millions of readers with expectations of

"Somebody once said they love it when ... authors come out and sit on the couch with Oprah because we all look like the deer that got caught in the headlights."

Author Wally Lamb

the authors come out and sit on the couch with Oprah because we all look like the deer that got caught in the headlights," says Lamb, 58, a lifelong Connecticut resident. "Her endorsement is a boon and a blessing, but you also have to figure out how to deal with it. Suddenly you have millions of readers with expectations of

mate at the same facility after committing vehicular manslaughter. Maureen's addiction is a consequence of having been traumatized while working as a school nurse at Columbine during the 1999 shooting rampage. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**



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Celebrity Buzz

50 Cent talks of fire

PEOPLE 50 Cent has opened up about the fire that destroyed his home earlier this year, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The rapper, whose real name is Curtis Jackson, refused to openly blame Shaniqua Tompkins for the blaze in May, but did confirm she was ordered to leave his home in Dix Hills, N.Y., just days before it was torched.

"The courts told her she had to leave. It's kind of more like, 'If I can't have you, you can't have it,'" he told Quddus Philippe, a correspondent for U.S. TV show TV One Access.

When Quddus asked the rapper if he believed Tompkins lit the fire, he replied: "Well, I don't want to say that — don't try to make me say something I don't want to say. But, the circumstances to it might seem that way."

Six people, including 50 Cent and Tompkins' 10-

year-old son Marquis, were rushed to hospital after the blaze.

Earlier in the year, Tompkins had filed a lawsuit against 50 Cent, claiming he had promised her a house 10 years ago.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Williams denies plans to accept Ledger prize

PEOPLE Heath Ledger's ex-fiancee Michelle Williams has denied she was set to accept any awards the late star wins for his role in The Dark Knight, imbd.com reports.

Ledger's performance as The Joker in the last movie he completed before his drug overdose death in January is expected to earn him a clutch of posthumous prizes during the forthcoming awards season. He is already nominated for the Best Supporting Actor Golden Globe, and is hotly tipped to become the first posthumous acting Oscar winner since Peter Finch in 1977.

Williams, the mother of Ledger's daughter Matilda, was thought to be among those contend-

ing to accept awards on her ex's behalf, along with his father Kim.

But the actress won't be involved.

"No discussions have been made for Michelle to accept nor are there any plans to take part," her representative says.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Panettiere treats young patients

SHOPPING Hayden Panettiere took patients from Los Angeles' Children's Hospital on a shopping spree over the weekend, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The actress accompanied five girls on a shopping trip on Saturday. Although Panettiere tried to give the group fashion advice, the kids had their own opinions on which outfits they wanted to choose.

"Not many of them listened to me!" Panettiere said, and laughed.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Washington gets dual citizenship

PEOPLE Former Grey's Anatomy star Isaiah Washington has become an official citizen of Sierra Leone, imbd.com reports.

The actor was born in Houston, Tex., but has spent several months working with Sierra Leone's President Ernest Bai Koroma in a bid to secure dual-nationality and celebrate his family's links to the African country.

President Koroma agreed to grant Washington full citizenship and hand him an official Sierra Leone passport in September.

The process has now been finalized and Washington is reportedly delighted to have achieved his goal.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Spears tops ET's hot list

PEOPLE Pop star Britney Spears has topped ET's annual Hot List, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

Spears took the No. 1 spot in the list, made up of stars who have received the most coverage and mentions on the TV program Entertainment Tonight in the past year.

"From a historical election to surprising splits, sizzling romances and major comebacks, 2008 was a remarkable

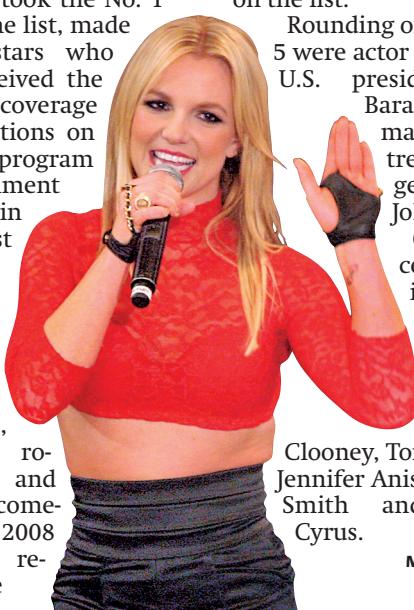
year for celebrity news," an ET writer said.

TV talk-show host Oprah Winfrey followed Spears on the list.

Rounding off the Top 5 were actor Brad Pitt, U.S. president-Elect Barack Obama and actress Angelina Jolie.

Other celebrities included in the Top 20 were actors George Clooney, Tom Cruise, Jennifer Aniston, Will Smith and Miley Cyrus.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Phillippe to spend holiday in Australia with girlfriend

RELATIONSHIPS Actor Ryan Phillippe is set to spend Christmas in Australia meeting his girlfriend's family, imbd.com reports.

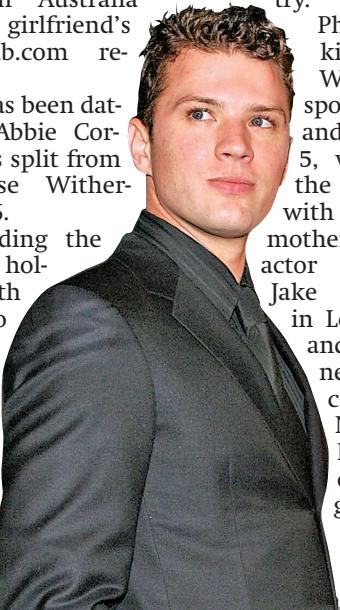
Phillippe has been dating actress Abbie Cornish since his split from ex-wife Reese Witherspoon in 2006.

After spending the Thanksgiving holiday last month with his two children by Witherspoon, Phillippe has flown to Australia to enjoy a romantic festive break with his partner,

meeting her extended family in the country.

Phillippe's kids with Witherspoon, Ava, 9, and Deacon, 5, will spend the holidays with their mother and her actor boyfriend Jake Gyllenhaal in Los Angeles and Tennessee, according to New York Post gossip column PageSix.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Jennifer is a good singer: Mayer

RELATIONSHIPS Jennifer Aniston loves singing and could have a successful music career, according to boyfriend John Mayer, imbd.com reports.

The actress is shy when it comes to showing off her voice, and only does it when she thinks no one else is listening. But Mayer is so impressed by her vocal talents, he's convinced she could become a recording artist.

"Do you know that girl can sing...? She does it when she doesn't think anybody's paying attention," he tells America's OK! magazine.

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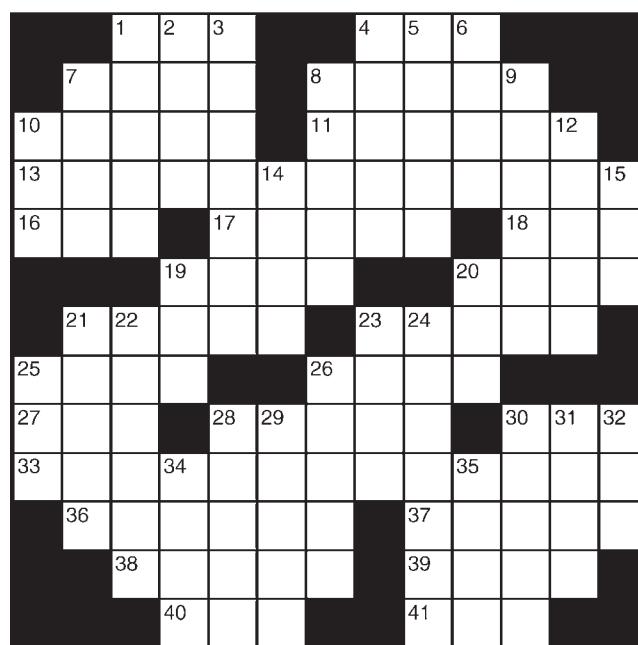
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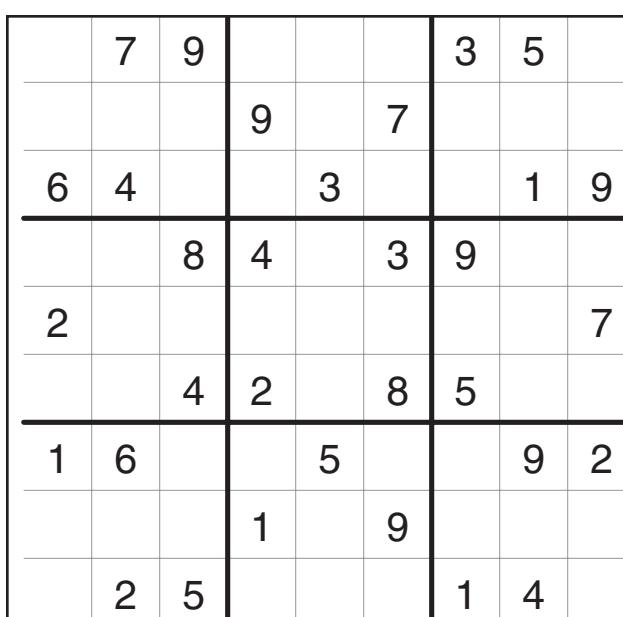
- 1 Sloppy home
4 Fed. watchdog org.
7 Gambling game
8 Vise
10 Had a bug
11 Esteems
13 What Jack did
16 Still, in verse
17 Senior moment
18 Cattle call?
19 Yon maiden's
20 Succotash ingredient
21 Steeple
23 Click-and-drag device
25 Reynolds or Lancaster
- 26 "Monopoly" pair
27 Blackbird
28 Construction-site machine
30 Bashful
33 Jill's fate
36 Read
37 Standards
38 Looks for
39 Rainbow
40 Dentist's degree (Abbr.)
41 Baseballer's hat

Crossword down

- 1 Beauty parlor
2 "Star —"
3 Alpine singer
4 Soft silk thread
5 Terpsichore's domain
6 Cupid's specialty
7 Conflagration
8 Fish side dish
9 Ads for upcoming TV shows
10 Honest politician
12 Cussed
14 Tortoise's opponent
15 Negative prefix
19 Smack
- 20 Prompt
21 Dawn
22 2, 3, 5, 7, 11, etc.
23 Chinese dynasty
24 Vast
25 Cudgel
26 Copenhagen populace
28 Gave hints
29 Puts on the line
30 Denude
31 Fashion lines?
32 Century fractions (Abbr.)
34 Raised
35 "In — penny, in ..."

Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

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U	T	A	H	A	D	O	T	R	A	P
S	A	L	E	S	E	A	H	O	P	E
S	C	A	R	P	E	T	E	R	O	S
R	O	S	E	H	I	P	M	O	T	E
O	B	E	Y	S	H	I	P	B	O	N
R	O	O	B	A	G	N	O	N		
B	O	N	E	D	R	Y	S	H	A	R
T	E	A	E	P	A	R	E	T	A	L
G	H	O	U	L	D	R	Y	L	A	N
L	A	N	D	L	O	R	D	P	L	E
A	L	I	E	F	O	O	E	T	A	L
M	O	S	S	A	P	R	R	O	P	E

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13-17 min Scholar

2	7	6	9	3	5	1	4	8
4	9	3	2	1	8	7	5	6
5	1	8	6	4	7	2	3	9
3	6	1	5	8	2	9	7	4
8	5	2	7	9	4	3	6	1
9	4	7	1	6	3	5	8	2
7	3	4	8	2	9	6	1	5
1	8	9	3	5	6	4	2	7
6	2	5	4	7	1	8	9	3

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17-21 min Smart
21-25 min Not bad
25+ min Keep practising

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You won't become a casualty of love. Phone a funny friend for a surprise. A flaw is found by a friendly person.

TAURUS**APRIL 21-MAY 21**

Take care on slippery surfaces. Someone's gullibility will scare you. Get a strong grip on your sense of responsibility.

GEMINI**MAY 22-JUNE 21**

Accept loving attention from your admirers. Someone's intuition gets the better of you. Good fortune comes through being diplomatic.

CANCER**JUNE 22-JULY 22**

Somebody's hypochondria will require your patience. An odd stranger intrudes on an important meeting. A mistake leads to mistreatment.

LEO**JULY 23-AUG 23**

A researcher uncovers a financial embarrassment. An elder gives evidence of cruelty. You'll need to get out more often.

VIRGO**AUG 24-SEPT 22**

A bureaucrat wins a stupid argument. A professional call causes a delay in plans. You're optimistic in the face of harsh reality.

LIBRA**SEPT 23-OCT 23**

A fearless person accepts adjustments gracefully. An egotistical friend will back you up. Too much devotion can be frustrating.

SCORPIO**OCT 24-NOV 22**

Try to get through to a coward. A bitter person speaks the truth. A chubby pal's attempts to fix things will resolve nothing.

SAGITTARIUS**NOV 23-DEC 21**

Everything's okay with a trustworthy person. A dreadful event leads to a disgrace. Someone is waiting for you to make a tough decision.

CAPRICORN**DEC 22-JAN 20**

A good friend needs more financial support. A beloved person shows where you went wrong. A flirt breaks up a party.

AQUARIUS**JAN 21-FEB 18**

A blundering prankster is more fun than usual. Necessary money is made available to those in need. Avoid nasty spats that are counter-productive.

PISCES**FEB 19-MARCH 20**

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